

SOCCER

Voice

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KICKS OFF

Tonight's match is vital. St George need only a draw, but Croatia will not let this happen, as they need both points.

Croatia will fail in this only if they panic as the minute hand goes around the face of the clock, unless they score first and are in the lead.

St George can stop Croatia from taking the lead if they can stop Patikas. But now St George face a new problem because if they could stop Patikas, even with Jurin by his side, it is doubtful that they will be able to stop these two players together with Rozic. That is a formidable trio indeed, and there will be few defences in the NSL this year able to stop them.

But St George too are not exactly poor in talent both in midfield and in the forward line, with Barton, Slater and Marton, the latter in his eternal Spring, all playing on top of themselves. In fact, in experience, St George definitely have the edge.

So the answer will come at the final whistle, unless one or the other of the two teams crumbles under a couple of goals earlier in the game. But though a possibility, the likelihood that this will happen is remote, for if one team scores, the other will go all out to draw level again.

For St George to score first is not impossible, and if they succeed in doing this, they will make Croatia's task all that much more difficult.

If Croatia scores first, this team will do everything in their power to hand on to the lead, which will bring St George out in their search for the equaliser that will give them the Cup and the money. The prospects are very interesting.



WHO TAKES THE MONEY?

TOP PHOTO: St George, 2 wins - need a draw. ABOVE PHOTO: Croatia, with one win and a draw MUST win.

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PINDARI CHALLENGE CUP

CROATIA v APIA 2-1
OLYMPIC v ST. GEORGE 0-2
ST GEORGE v APIA 3-0
OLYMPIC v CROATIA 1-1

1985 Soccer kicked off last week with the Pindari Challenge Cup, and SOCCER VOICE came back with it, the Soccer Paper to be first on sale this year.

The Challenge Cup co-incides with our second Birthday, and we take up the Challenge to face the third year of our publication.

In a democratic country such as Australia, it is the prerogative of every component of this society to criticise, without insulting, anyone. The public has the right to criticise us, just as we have the right to criticise, sometimes, the way soccer is run, and all other things relating to the game.

Judging from letters received, we can proudly say that we have by far the consensus of the Australian world of soccer, as the letters of praise as to the way we present the game to our readers, far outweighs those that do not approve of our publication.

This being so, we will continue on our way, hoping to improve even further, and so make more readers and more friends.

As for our criticism, here too we know that we are right in the points we constructively criticised in the past. And we know this because most of our criticism has been heeded.

We were not alone to criticise the outlandish 'Conference' appellation, but we were certainly the first to do so. This name has now been dropped, and the name 'Division' adopted.

We were among those who criticised the arbitrary veto on the use of ethnic names. We did this not because we uphold the use of ethnic names. We don't. But the forceful abolition of ethnic names did nothing to improve soccer; on the contrary, it kept some people away.

We believe that the big masses of ethnics form the bulk of soccer crowds. We believe that the majority of these people wish to keep their ethnic identity.

Because they form the majority, and on democratic principles only, we believe this identity should have their wish.

At the same time let us say this. We believe the majority is wrong. We believe this majority should rally around a club bearing the name of the district, and not of some European country.

We also believe that this majority, for some years to come, will not see this point. But we also believe that at some time in the future this point will be made clear to all.

That day may be closer than most people think; but it will not be this year, nor the year after. When it comes it will be to the best of all concerned, especially to Australian Soccer. Let's hope it will not be too far away.

In the meantime, we have other things to worry about. 1985 is World Cup elimination round year. We must concentrate on this. We assure our readers that Soccer Voice will have much to say about this in the coming weeks.

What we will have to say is only constructive. So bear with us.

N.S.W. AMPOL CUP NOTEBOOK

The 1985 Ampol Cup kicked off last weekend with results that were predictable, alternating with other less so. Hereunder is the list:-

BANKSTOWN — WARRINGAH 1-0

Goal: P. Hassan

AUBURN — POLONIA 5-2

Goals: O'Shana (2), Varela (2), Donoso (Auburn)

Anderson, Sobczyk (Polonia)

ROCKDALE — CANTERBURY 1-0

Goal: Karanfilovski

MELITA — SUTHERLAND 3-2

Goals: Allan, Walker, Farrugia (Melita)

Dal Forno, Connor (Sutherland)

PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Challenge Cup — T.K. Tikay

Buffalo Cup — Des Papp

WILL AUSTRALIA MAKE THE FINALS IN WORLD CUP?

Four years ago this month, in a spirit of optimism and hope, I wrote that Australia could still make it to the 1982 World Cup finals. Despite the thousands of words written about the 1981 November-December tour, the thousands of miles of travel and the match results, I believed Australia had the ability and talent to get to Spain.

Brave words at the time and contrary to many of the reports during and after the Rudi Gutendorf tour and certainly without anticipation of the disgraceful Socceroo capitulation to New Zealand at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Australia completed the 1981 eight-match program with two wins, two draws and four losses — a result which could so easily have been six wins.

On the 12-match 1984 tour, Australia finished with three wins, one draw and eight losses — a result which could have just as easily been seven wins, two draws and three defeats.

And this would have been against the strongest lineup of international clubs that an Australian touring team has ever had to face.

On the run of play and performance, the Australians looked every inch the number one nation in the Pacific-Asian area.

But if this review is to be factual, it must start at the beginning when the squad of 22 left for China and Europe with the stated objective of finding a national eleven capable of overcoming the hurdles to reach Mexico.

However, "The Perils of Pauline", the adventurous heroine of early movie days, was never faced with some of the problems which the Socceroos encountered on their world merry-go-round.

The 35 days itinerary consisted of booking into 11 hotels, long coach rides to grounds and to hotels, 70 hours of flying, hours of waiting at airports but still a far better organised tour than the 1981 project.

Admittedly, Australia will face a hectic program later this year when it begins the Oceania qualifying rounds of the World Cup and there are a number of similarities in travel and time between games.

The obvious logic is that if a player could not successfully complete the 1984 tour, then his chances must be reduced for selection in the 1985 World Cup program.

Probably the biggest problem coach Frank Arok had to face during the China-Europe journey was the lack of professionalism at critical periods and the inability of certain players to produce the 100 percent commitment needed to match the opposition.

Matches which should have finished in a draw or a win for Australia were turned into defeat in the dying minutes of the game through slack marking or missed chances.

Canton beat Australia with a goal in the 89th minute, Eindhoven won



TERRY GREEDY

with two goals in the last three minutes, Arsenal scored with 30 seconds remaining. None of those goals should have been scored.

On statistics, Australia was held scoreless in four matches — the same as the 1980 tour, whereas the 1976 tour only had one match in which the Socceroos failed to score.

The figures also revealed that the 1984 team averaged 1.25 goals a game and conceded 1.75. In 1980, the Socceroos had the figures of 0.86 scored per game and 1.6 against, while the 1976 team averaged 1.45 a game and conceded 1.6.



CHARLIE EGAN

Charlie Egan was the best striker on tour, putting away four goals, with Marshall Soper and Oscar Crino three each and one to John Kosmina, Ian Gray, Tom McCulloch, Steve O'Connor and David Ratcliffe.

On the debit side, Kosmina received three of the ten yellow cards issued, with one each to Soper, Steve O'Connor, Mike O'Shea, Joe Watson, Ratcliffe, John O'Shea and Charlie Yankos.

But on to the matches. Australia struck the Chinese national team first up in Beijing and registered its first loss.

A near capacity crowd of 50,000 watched China score first, Australia equalise, the pattern

repeated and then China came away with the winning goal when no one challenged the Chinese captain as he let fly after taking the ball through the centre of the field.

Australia reversed the score for a 3-2 win against local side Beijing who picked up its goal when Australia relaxed in the last 18 minutes. This was followed by a 2-0 win over Shanghai with a goal in each half.

However, the scoring pattern that was going to mar the tour surfaced in the final China game when Canton came from behind for a 2-1 win. The last goal was scored with 60 seconds remaining.



OSCAR CRINO

On to England and the match against Manchester City where a 3-1 success boosted the Australians and angered the local manager who said the Socceroos had played like professionals while his team had performed like amateurs.

The confidence was evident when Australia marched on to the Nottingham City Ground but they failed to snap up the chances that were created and had to be content with a scoreless draw. It was the third draw in succession against Forest who had finished with a 1-1 and 2-2 result during its tour of Australia last year.



MARSHALL SOPER

Glasgow Rangers could be called the start of "The Fall of the Socceroos".



by Ted Simmons

At stages, the Australians toyed with the Jock Wallace warriors and the veteran Scottish coach described the Socceroos performance as "magic" as his players ran fruitlessly in search of the ball.



JOHN COSMINA

But it was a different story when they did get the ball and the two goals by World Cup winger David Cooper spelt the margin between a draw and a win.

Like Nottingham Forest and Manchester City, the Rangers put a top class side on the park and there were no beg-pardons during the stirring struggle until Rangers walked off 2-1 in front.

The following night, after two plane flights and two bus journeys, the Australians lined up at PSV Stadium to meet Eindhoven who had eight current internationals on the field.

Despite only fielding three members of the recognised first team, the tourists managed to hold the star-studded opposition until the dying moments when they conceded two quick goals.

The match was memorable for the referee deciding not to award a penalty when the goal keeper deliberately pushed Soper to the ground while it was still scoreless. The referee later said he took no action because Soper had allegedly elbowed the keeper a few minutes earlier.

Back to England and a London hotel which turned out to be the worst accommodation of the tour. From there, it was a couple of hours drive to Birmingham where Aston Villa strolled to an easy 2-0 win.

The Australians said they were tired but most of them merely played like spectators with Arok making six substitutions to try and instill some sparkle into the team. It was the worst performance of the tour.

Two days later in a complete reversal the team gave its best performance against early English first division leaders Arsenal even though they lost 3-2.

Arsenal fielded such players as Viv Anderson, Ken Sansom, Paul Mariner, Charlie Nicholas and Tony Woodcock and again there was no quarter given once the play got under way.

The match followed the same pattern as the Ampol Cup game against China with each side taking it in turn to score although Arsenal was helped by a terrible defensive blunder by Terry Greedy who tried to pass the ball instead of booting it into the grand stand.

Once more Australia held its ground against a vastly superior opponent, on paper at least, and even the Arsenal supporters were beginning to heckle their own team and give credit to the Australians.

Soper displayed absolute brilliance as he cut through the Arsenal defence in his best match of the tour, playing the right wing in an attacking role and with skill that would not have been out of place in an English first division side.

But the defensive

problem was still lurking in the background.

Substitute Raphael Meade, who came on 11 minutes from full time, exploited a hesitant backline with 30 seconds remaining and whipped the ball past Greedy for an undeserved winner.

The Australians had given such a good impression against the well-established Arsenal that club manager Don Howe refused to talk to the media after the game.

On to Italy for the match against Udinese and a redoubtable Zico.

Two first half goals before a midweek afternoon crowd of more than 22,000 delighted the home crowd who had been going through a period of lost matches in the Italian first division and a threat of relegation over Udinese.

Zico showed why he was worth \$6 million on the transfer market with a superb goal in the 14th minute when he weaved his way through about four Australian defenders before running the ball into the net.

He didn't extend himself in the match, but every time he got the ball it spelt danger for the Australians.

His control, skill and accuracy of passing was a lesson to be learned by every promising player.

Arok did not field his strongest side although he was again forced to make a number of substitutions to replace obviously out-classed players and to inject some much needed life into the Socceroo attack.

Two days in Venice after the match gave the Australians a break from the tour schedule but was not the best preparation for the final match of the journey, which was to be against Tottenham Hotspurs who were about ready to go to the top of Division One table.

Controversy erupted in the Australian camp when it was discovered the match was not going to be at White Hart Lane but was to be moved to Cheshunt, the Spurs training ground in the country.

Despite heated protests by the travelling media and grumbles by the players, the match went ahead as scheduled — a terrible embarrassment for the team which found itself treated as a poor relation instead of a national side.

It should never have occurred and should never

be allowed to happen again.

In addition, Spurs rested all of the team which had played the First Division match the previous day and fielded the challengers for first team places. The match was played in rain with about 100 people huddled under a small stand, while one man, without his proverbial dog, was the sole spectator on the other side of the field.

Despite the farcical arrangements, the Spurs team was still strong and players such as Ossie Ardiles, Garth Crooks, Danny Thomas, Alistair Dick could not be classed as second rate.

In fact, nearly all of the team had played first division and some of them were in Spurs first eleven within a few weeks of the match and scoring the winners which took them to the top of the table.

Although Spurs won 2-1, the match will be remembered for the skill of Ardiles, who made both goals and the outstanding play by Crino, Anthony Franken and McCulloch.

If the controversy is ignored, the match was certainly worthwhile in providing a further insight on the ability of the Australians.



PETER RATCLIFFE

TOUR STATISTICS

Figures sometimes make interesting reading. The following detail reveals tour selection information. It is based on selection in the starting line-up, full games played, number of times replaced, used as a first half substitute, used as a second half substitute.

For example, David Ratcliffe would read 10 times selected, 7 full games, 3 times replaced, not used as a first half sub, used once as a second half substitute and the figures 10-7-3-0-1.

The remainder of the team were used as follows:

Terry Greedy 7-7-0-0-0, Tony Pezzano 3-3-0-0-0, Anthony Franken 2-2-0-0-0, Wally Savor 5-3-2-0-2, Graham Jennings 9-6-3-0-0-0, Charlie Yankos 8-6-2-0-0, Steve O'Connor 8-5-3-

0-0, Steve O'Connor 8-5-3-0-1, Joe Watson 8-4-4-0-0, Ken Murphy 9-6-3-0-1, Phil O'Connor 4-1-4-1-2, John Kosmina 9-6-3-0-1, Marshall Soper 7-2-5-0-3, Ian Gray 6-4-2-0-3, Frank Farina 5-3-2-0-6, Peter Raskopoulos 4-1-3-0-2, Mike O'Shea 4-4-0-0-1, John O'Shea 4-4-0-0-5, Alex Robertson 4-4-0-0-2, Tom McCulloch 6-6-0-0-2, Oscar Crino 5-3-2-2-4, Charlie Egan 5-2-3-0-4.

Some interesting points to come from those figures include the fact that 44 substitutions were made in a total of 12 games. David Ratcliffe was the first person selected the most times, followed by Graham Jennings, Ken Murphy and John Kosmina.

Ratcliffe and keeper Terry Greedy played the most full games (7 each), with Jennings, Murphy, Kosmina and Tom McCulloch just one behind. Marshall Soper was replaced the most times, starting in seven matches and being pulled out of the game five times, although he was used as a substitute in three others.

The least selected player was young keeper Anthony Franken who was used only twice on the tour and fellow keeper Tony Pezzano who got three games. After



TOM McCULLOCH

Soper, Phil O'Connor and Joe Watson were the most substituted players, each being taken off on four occasions.

The most consistent starting line-up was: Greedy, Jennings, Yankos, Steve O'Connor, Ratcliffe, Murphy, Watson, Kosmina, Soper, Gray and McCulloch.

The squad which played the most full games was: Greedy, Ratcliffe, Jennings, Yankos, McCulloch, Murphy, Kosmina, Steve O'Connor, Watson, Gray, Mike O'Shea, John O'Shea and Robertson.

Arok obviously gave his players every opportunity to settle down and try to establish themselves. There were only three first half replacements and each of them was for an injury. The remaining substitut-

ions were made either at half time or during the second half.

Another interesting set of figures deals with the goals.

During the 12 matches, Australia scored 9 times in the first half and only 6 goals in the second half. But for the opposition, Australia conceded 9 goals in the first half and 12 in the second half.

One destroying factor is that eight of the second half goals were scored in the final 20 minutes against Australia and five of those in the last five minutes.

Australia managed to score only one goal in the final 20 minutes when Egan made it 3-1 in the 73rd minute against Manchester City. The nearest Australian score to that time was Soper's 69th minute goal against Arsenal.

Figures are easy to write but deductions and answers are more difficult.

It is easy to see that Australia's striking power was not good and our second half strength was mostly used in trying to contain the opposition. On the occasions the team did work the ball forward, there were few players to take advantage of the opportunities and many of these were either wasted or high or the attempt was smothered by the defence.

Having digested all of the tour information, the summing-up is rather more difficult.

Greedy came out of the tour still the Number One keeper, with Ratcliffe and McCulloch the two top players. They were closely followed by Jennings, Crino and Soper. McCulloch, Crino and Soper were at times brilliant in the later games when other players were complaining of being tired.

Ratcliffe deserved his choice as the number one selection for consistency of play and the fact that he never gave less than 100 percent commitment in any match. If his attitude had been adopted by all players, the results would have been different.

The tiredness claim by the players and their complaint that the tour was too rushed can be measured against the 1980 tour which involved 70 hours in the air, 70 hours at airports and booking into 18 hotels in 33 days or the 1976 tour which had 11 matches or the 1970 tour where 15 matches were played all over the world in less than five weeks.

Many times the statement has been made that Australian soccer players are only part-timers, but then so are our athletes, swimmers and others who have managed through dedication and discipline to

become the best in the world. It all depends on whether you WANT to be the best or just go along for the ride.

There could be some slight excuses offered for the two losses in China as the visit included a number of official functions and the Chinese were marvellous hosts.

But England started with a win and a draw and then six successive defeats as team morale and discipline became fragmented. The frequent changes did not allow the team to settle down into a working partnership even though the object of the tour was clearly stated as an experiment to enable Arok to find the players who will get Australia to Mexico next year.

In skill and ability, this squad is far in advance of the Socceroos of past years and, when it decides to play, can match tactics with the best.

They play well defensively apart from one or two players who tend to panic under pressure through mental and physical slackness. But the cover and backup is good.

Midfield shows plenty of promise with the prompting of Ratcliffe to spur young prospects like McCulloch and Crino whose contrasting styles could rip apart an opposing defence.

Crino told me he went away to learn and used every opportunity to watch and question the internat-

ional players the team met.

He practiced their moves and suggestions and his brilliance against Tottenham had the English journalists asking were there any more like him in Australia.

Once again, however, our big problem lies in attack. We need players who can score goals and there are not many outstanding candidates for the position. Kosmina returned with only one goal to his credit but worked hard to get his fellow strikers into the game.

The Socceroos lack a target man and maybe David Mitchell or Eddie Krncevic might be the answer. Certainly someone is needed because having a good defensive record alone will not get Australia to the World Cup finals.

Arok does not have much time left. The first qualifying games for the Oceania World Cup rounds start in September and his team must be together and working as a unit before then.

He already has the knockers ready to take him apart and say "I told you so" if Australia is beaten and it's sad that we have people with so much spite. At this time, the coach needs every ounce of support — from players, officials and the public.

The players have been tried and tested. Total concentration and effort is now needed for the Qualifying rounds if Australia Once again wants to match skills with the greats of the soccer world.

PINDARI CHALLENGE

By: Gino De la Scerri

CUP 1985

The tradition started by St George to kick off the season with a Challenge Cup was kept alive last week with a double header at the St George Soccer Ground, when all four participating teams played each other.

The tradition had its baptism in 1982 with the most ambitious soccer season debut to date. That year, St George had invited Vojvodina from Yugoslavia, and the Hungarian National side, no less.

Unfortunately, the ASF then stepped in after that, and ruled that in future all overseas teams may be invited to play in Australia only through the supreme body.

For this reason, the following year, and this year too, only local sides competed in the Challenge Cup. But be that as it may, the soccer public is grateful to St George for

setting the ball rolling each year in such an interesting way.

This year, the tournament was little advertised, but the Greeks and the Croatian people knew about it; and when Olympic and Croatia are in action, the presence of a big crowd is assured. And that's how it was on Wednesday, and Sunday night, at the St George Stadium.

To make it even more interesting, there is a prize money of \$5,000 for the winner of the tournament, and that's one reason why the players of all four teams gave no quarter. For the coaches, it's a good chance to see how their charges are shaping.

For two of these coaches, the first round was relatively encouraging; but not so for the other two. Fil Bottalico must have spent the night as one suffering of indigestion.

APIA NIGHTMARE

These pre-season games are no indication of the real strength of the teams, all of which, or at least most of them, are in the experimental stage, with many of their regular players not yet back in the team. Some clubs are not even sure that these players will be back.

CROATIA - 2 APIA - 1



Croatia defender Brett Woods sporting a beard, in the Apia area.

Arnold's goal had come from a free kick, the ball coming to the centre where Arnold turned it in beautifully.

Excitement is high. We seldom see three goals scored in the first ten minutes. But play is very mediocre. Croatia did show some ideas, no doubt product of excellent coaching, but even these, all attuned on the right flank with the inevitable final centre, became a little stale after a while, even if against a weak team such as 'that' Apia team, this pattern was very effective.

However, both sets of forwards kept moving, but both defences looked distracted, especially Apia's.

Unfortunately, the referee and one linesman were no less distracted most of the time, and that's how two Apia forwards were not whistled off side in the 16th minute when both were five or six metres behind the Croatia last line. Also unpunished went a number of kicks, back-pushing, and other infringements of almost every law in the book. However, Mr Seacy, who refereed the match, did pull back the worst offender in this department, Apia's Ali Reda, and had a word with him.

In the 25th minute Martinez came out of limbo and replaced Caban, who was hurt, and now the Apia forward line suddenly found a little more smoothness. But Martinez, who still possesses good qualities, never really integrated with the rest of the team, and often went his own way, as he tried to solve the situation by himself.

Catlin made one great save just before half time, when he punched the ball in a flying dive, and the woodwork did the rest for him, and another good save soon after the resumption.

On this second attempt, the Apia goalkeeper fumbled with the ball, lost it, then dived back on it to smother it on the ground under his body. A little unorthodox, but a good save for all that.

Fil Bottalico must be

waiting anxiously for the regular players to return. And no wonder. As things stand at the moment, the Apia Coach has quite a job on his hands as he tries to mould his strugglers into something resembling a soccer team.

For Croatia, Caleta, who replaced Kero late in the piece, showed he has some good numbers. It was Caleta that nearly scored a third goal for Croatia when on one of those stereotyped moves already mentioned, he headed promptly, but through inexperience, too centrally at the Apia goalkeeper.

The move had started.



Brett Woods.



Apia, for instance, fielded only about half a regular team, certainly not enough to hold their own against a team as keen as Croatia always is, and was on Wednesday last week.

Already in the 5th minute, Apia were one goal down. Nothing to worry about very much, except for the way that goal was scored. A long dropping ball, Catlin went up to take it in his hands; a defender goes up with him to head the same ball away. Neither of them succeeds in his intention, but both together manage to let the ball fly off the goalkeeper's hands to

fall at their back where Arnold obligingly taps it into the back of the net. The Apia fullback shows his disgust with a gesture of his hand.

Within less than a minute, Morsello, looking overweight and out of condition, but still the only player with any brains in the Apia line up, squares things up when he catches Woodhouse out of his charge.

The two teams are on equal terms again.

Another three minutes, and Arnold scores a second goal for Croatia, which is also the winner, as no more goals are scored after this.

with Brett Woods, almost unrecognisable behind a beard, who sent wide to Jurin, who then pin-pointed a ball for Caleta's head.

Apia had a chance to equalise when De Ceglie stopped a ball, then left this for Martinez, who however, sent the ball sailing over the bar. As said at the beginning, Croatia are on the move, and they should be a much better team this year than they were in their first season in the National League.

This can be done if those moves on the right flank alternate with thrusts down the centre, and also more

utilisation of their left flank, that never had a chance to perform very much against Apia.

As for the Leichhardt team, this cannot be judged before a full team is in action. The team we saw against Croatia in the opening match of this Challenge Cup, cannot be taken seriously, nor can it be the team the Leichhardt club has in mind for 1985.

CROATIA: Woodhouse, Kovacic (Meads 41), Tomasic, Woods, Vidaic, Basic, Jurin, M. Kovacic (Peulic 65), Arnold, Rezo, Kero (Caleta 65).

APIA: Catlin, Spina, Brown,

Apia full-back, Mark Brown (left) challenges Woods for the ball, but the Croatia advanced defender has already passed the ball.

Jones, Butler, Genovesa, Caban (Martinez 25), Morsello, De Ceglie, Ali Reda (Morson 75), Licata. **GOALS:** Arnold, 2, (Croatia), Morsello (Apia). **REFEREE:** Mr Seacy.

ST GEORGE - 2 OLYMPIC - 0

It was great to see Robbie O'Shea stepping lively on the ground after an absence of 10 months. Robert had broken his leg in the match against Marconi in March last year, after playing only two rounds of the National League.

But why did this great sportsman have to spoil his return to the game with a yellow card for protesting, that was totally unnecessary?

In their match against Olympic, who were playing with a number of Youth players, St George gave good signs of a revival, after a nightmarish season last year, and what was very encouraging was that at last the players have accepted the hard fact that 'wizard' Des Marton may not last forever.

Playing without Marton in the first half, St George were a discretely sound outfit. Even so, when Marton came in after the interval, the team improved by at least 50 percent.

Not to be outdone by Croatia of the earlier match, St George opened the score in the 2nd minute when the lanky St George wingman, J. Broadhouse beat the experienced Meier hands down. You can't miss Broadhouse, with his ungainly run, but this player showed that he has some good qualities.

Another player that should be noticed was Rida Hussein, who has just come to Australia from Lebanon, and is an unknown quantity. In the short time Hussein was in the ground (he came in as a replacement for Petkovski late in the 2nd half), this player showed he is familiar with the ball, and has some deft touches. He seems to read the game well, and is at the right place for a sudden shot at goal.

Unfortunately, Hussein was in the ground only for a short time and cannot be fully judged. But one would like to see more of him.

After the goal St George tried quickly for a bigger lead. Playing buoyantly, Stone sent right to Petkovski who centréd (a la Croatia) to John O'Shea, who just missed the upright with his header.

Olympic offered little opposition. The young players replacing the regular ones, probably too eager to show their coach they are valid replacements and merit a place in the first team, made the mistake that is the mark of the inexperienced, and tried to substitute methodical football with much running, and hustle and bustle football.

But St George came out in the second half, when Des Marton came in as a replacement and marshalled the forward line.

Within one minute, Marton created an excellent chance for Petkovski to extend the lead, But Meier came out to close the angle, and in a good effort to place the ball out of the Olympic goalie's reach, Petkovski sent the ball just over the cross bar.

Olympic countered with great spirit, but as said, in a disorganised fashion, and for the best part of this half were pushed back inside their own area.

One player in my book that stood out for Olympic is Svinos, a player with tremendous power in his shooting. The best, the strongest, two shots at the St George goal came from this young player, including a free kick towards the end that deserved better luck.

The Saints' second goal should never have been scored. It was only the inexperience of these Olympians that made it happen. The back line players got into each other's way, and this allowed Petkovski to save a ball that was going out. Petkovski then slotted this into Olympic's goal.

The Challenge match in round one of the Pindari Cup showed that St George are on the way back. The team is not yet settled, but the backbone structure of faithfulness is all there. Marton is still useful for yet another year ... perhaps more; with a player like that you can never tell.

However, one cannot see Frank Arok omitting to have a valuable replacement for his star player, who is more likely to be utilised only part of a game as necessary.



David Skeen (left) of St George, finds a narrow opening between two Olympic players through which to send in his pass.

It is just as certain, one feels, that the St George coach will bring up more players, to ensure that St George will not repeat the disastrous season they had last year when the Saints crumbled after injuries, on and off the field, to some key players, and had to carry on with the thinnest of lines.

Olympic face an even bigger problem, and they must put their house in order.

Olympic seem certain to lose Patikas who will "never kick a ball again for

Olympic". This player who, let it never be forgotten, is one of the best Australian product, echoed more or less, the same words he uttered at the time he wanted to leave Sydney City when he said that.

Patikas, being of Greek blood, wanted to join Olympic for sentimental reasons. This time he is a mature player who thinks professionally and, being a great player, like a primadonna, wants to have his way.

Schaefer takes all this in

a professional manner too. If some players must go, it's not the end of the world; he will just have to bring up new players to replace them.

That may be so, but first he has to have some good public relations person with him to pacify the supporters, who shouldn't expect the same team Olympic was in 1984 ... not for this year, unless the club is ready to open the purse strings to buy other players. But this depends on what is in the purse, which, according to

reliable reports, is no Aladdin cave.

ST GEORGE: Greedy, Skeen, R. O'Shea, Barton (Koczka 41), Ratcliffe, M. O'Shea, Slater, Stone (Ricoy 41), Petkovski (Hussein 63), J. O'Shea, Broadhouse (Marton 41).

OLYMPIC: Meier, Hanoitis, Jennings, Dakos, Lambropoulos, Naumov, Svinos, Zervas, M. Koussas (A. Koussas), Katholos, Stewart Johnson.

GOALS: Broadhouse, Petkovski (St George).

REFEREE: T. Davies.

ST GEORGE MAKE IT LOOK EASY

St George beat Apia 3-0 on Sunday, and is now in the box seat, but Croatia, one point behind is sure to make life difficult for the Saints in the final match tonight.

ST GEORGE 3 - APIA 0

The match against Apia was too one-sided, and almost a practice run for St George who are fast settling down into a good, compact team. But Apia, though with only three or four first team players, held

on to a scoreless second half, after trailing 0-3 at the close of the first 40 minutes.

Against St George, Apia played much better than they did against Croatia in the first round on Wednes-



Three players jump high for the ball, but it is Koczka, of St George (in white strip, and almost concealed) who wins this header.

day, and the best executed move of the whole match came from the Leichhardt team.

This very professional move came two minutes before half time, when Tanovski, Genovese, Gardikiotis, Butler, Mark Brown and Licata played what looked like invisible lace work with their passing of the ball that threw the Saints defence so completely off balance that Ricoy found it necessary to hold

Licata by the waist to stop him going down on Greedy in goal.

St George had opened the account with Marton (penalty), and Koczka, who scored on the turn from a corner.

St George, who closed the scoring spree through Robert Slater in the 33rd minute, never lost control of the game, and with a three goal lead at the close of the first half, seemed set to prepare Apia for a second

half rout. But as said, no goals came after the interval.

Apia did not seem to take the match too seriously, but the Leichhardt team did create a few chances. One was in the 20th minute, Genovese placed the ball over Mike O'Shea for P. Jones who, in the clear, shot but not too effectively.

A minute later came the



Apia's goalkeeper, Catlin, hugs the ball to his chest, as St George's Mark Barton moves in on him.

Continued Page 6.

ST GEORGE MAKE IT LOOK EASY

From Page 5

first goal, from a move started by Skeen who pinpointed a lob to Slater's head.

Apia replied with a delightful move from Genovese, Tanovski and Reda. This move, with the Apia players juxtaposed passing deftly to each other, opened the Saints defense like a tin of sardines. But Reda was too tightly marked when last to receive the ball, could not shoot hard enough to beat Greedy.

Soon after this, a chance came to Licata, who was robbed of the ball just as the winger was about to shoot. A few minutes later Mr Warne blew his whistle for half time.

On the resumption St George took the field with John O'Shea in place of Peter Stone, while Apia replaced Tanovski with Martinez.

St George nearly increased the lead when Slater missed twice, the first time when his excellent shot was blocked by the Apia goalkeeper who had come out to close the angle, and then when Slater sent out on the rebound. After that, Skeen was given a yellow card.

Then it was Koczka who nearly surprised the Apia goalie with a terrific shot from 25 metres, but Catlin saved brilliantly when he

palmed out.

Now Hussein, whom we had noted favourably on Wednesday, replaced Petkovski. But this time the Lebenese was not much in evidence, although he played the few balls that came to him well.

De Ceglie deserved better luck when he took the ball through the St George defence, and then tried to place this past Greedy, who lost the ball after stopping on the ground. De Ceglie saw his chance and foot toed the ball in, but Koczka saved on the line at the base of the upright.

Then it was Licata who missed when he placed the ball over Greedy, who was saved by the woodwork.

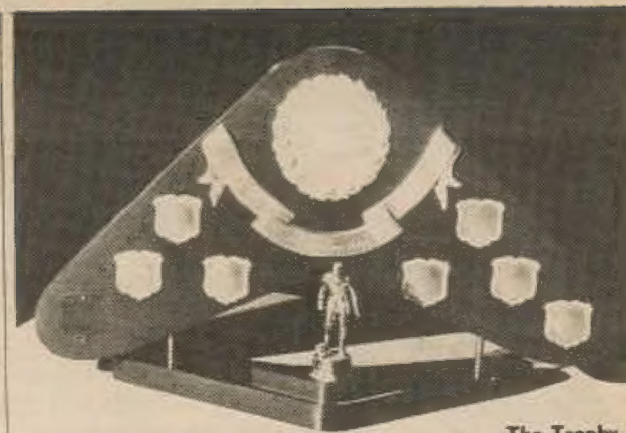
St George replied with a Des Marton thrust, who went around two Apia defenders, then passed to John O'Shea, who shot wildly out.

ST GEORGE: Greedy, Skeen, Petkovski (Hossein 60), Barton, Ratcliffe, M. O'Shea (Moffit 66), Slater, Stone (J. O'Shea 41), Koczka, Ricoy (Darlington 66), Marton.

APIA: Catlin, Spina, Tanovski (Martinez 41), De Ceglie, Jones, Reda, Genovese, Butler, Brown, Gardikiotis, Licata.

GOALS: Marton (penalty), Koczka, Slater.

REFEREE: G. Warne.



The Trophy.



St George defender, Mike O'Shea, heads the ball away in an Apia attack.



An action from the St George - Apia Challenge Cup match, showing Koczka heading.



Two St George players, Pedro Ricoy (centre) and Petkovski, get into each other's way as they try unsuccessfully to stop the Apia player.



St George 'Old-young-man', Dez Marton tries to place a ball past Apia 'keeper R. Catlin.



St George striker, Robbie Slater, fails to intercept the ball that Apia 'keeper Robert Catlin secures.



Catlin is beaten, but Marton has placed the ball a little too wide.

BEST MATCH OF THE

CROATIA 1 — OLYMPIC 1 SERIES

With only four clubs participating, the Pindari Challenge Cup leaves little leeway to those teams dropping any points. Playing the first match, and winning it, St George made sure of getting full points from the two matches played. Consequently Croatia then faced Olympic on handicap because of this.

The opening paragraph amply shows how important it was for Croatia to win this match, and how hopeless the position looked when Mark Koussas put Olympic ahead in the 38th minute. Croatia now had to score two goals against a team that up to that time had shown a great transformation from the one that had gone down to St George four days before.

But very little is impossible for such a resilient team as Croatia. It certainly was not impossible for this Croatia who had the addition of a devastating Patikas making a 'guest' appearance with them.

And it was Patikas who helped Croatia to draw level, and so keep their hopes alive for a final confrontation with St George tonight.

For full 56 minutes Patikas was soundly booed by the Olympic supporters who probably see him as a traitor, both as an Olympic team member, and as a 'Greek'. But when Patikas netted the equaliser in such a masterly fashion in the 56th minute, the Olympic supporters were silenced.

Patikas then made a triumphant run to the stands, his satisfaction in showing the Olympians what he's worth, written all over him, and at the same time receiving a standing ovation from the Croatia supporters, who expect him to sign for the club within the next few days.

Olympic coach, Manfred Schaefer, while accepting the fact that his midfielder's departure is probable, will not discount all possibilities that things could still work out between the player and the club.

Whether Patikas goes to Croatia (or to some other

club) or whether he stays with Olympic remains to be seen. What is certain at the moment is that his contribution to Croatia on Sunday was the deciding factor that kept the Croat club in the running for the money.

St George may be in the box seat at the moment of going to press, but with Patikas in this mood, and now with Rozic probably in the Croatian team, that seat is very unsteady. In spite of the one point difference, Croatia must start as favourites tonight. But whatever happens, there's no doubt that there will be a fireworks show on a grand scale for the customers at the St George Stadium tonight.

Things started going right from the kick off, but the first real action in the match came in the 16th minute from a free kick taken by Koussas in the 16th minute. The shot bounced off the defence to Mark Koussas who quickly shot at goal, this came back to Katholos; again a rebound this time to Phillips who with an even harder shot hit the woodwork.

In the 22nd Patikas gets a corner when the ball hits Spanadakis and is deflected out. Olympic were playing quite well at this stage, and their counter attacks were even more dangerous than those of their opponents.

But Olympic, though trying to hide it, were mostly worried because of Patikas in the Croat camp. Their 'ex-team mate' is the one causing them all the trouble.

From a pass by Woods, Patikas centres to Jurin, who allows Naumov to get in first and rob him of a good chance.

In the 27th minute, Alex



Croatia's goalkeeper, Greg Woodhouse, dives on the ball in an Olympic attack by Mark Koussas (right), Alex Kovacic (No.2) mounts guard on the goal line.

Kovacic trips Kalantzis near the half way line, but nothing comes out of the ensuing free kick.

One minute later, there is a move by the Olympic players, concluded with a great header by Kalantzis, and just as great a save by Woodhouse in the Apia goal.

This goal came two minutes before half time, which closed with a good try by Katholos from 30 metres.

On the change over, Haniotis replaced Lambropoulos for Olympic, while Croatia changed Woods, with Caleta, and Rezo with veteran Steve Meads.

The match resumes with

They bring up many balls with Kovacic, and Patikas' runs are really worrying.

Croatia brings in John Basic for Tomasic hoping to improve the situation.

Now we note down a great move by Kalantzis, who went around Woods then challenged Woodhouse to another great save

Sydney Olympic appear a little confused and disorganised. They also begin to lose contact with the game as they clearly showed they had accepted the draw as 'one of those things'.

On the other hand, Croatia renewed their



Ex-Melita, and Olympic new signing, Johnstone (left) seen in action on an Olympic corner against Croatia in the drawn match last Wednesday.

Now Kalantzis, who had a great game and was every inch as good as Patikas, goes past his old team mate and shoots, but the ball is deflected in corner by Tom Basic.

Olympic looks a little the more dangerous team of the two. Koussas puts the ball nicely to Svinos, who breaks through, creating some confusion in the Croat goalmouth, saved in corner. This results in a melee on the goal line. Koussas seems to be last to put his foot at the ball. The ball rolls over the line, where a Croatian tries to pull it out. But Mr Lorenc, one of our most conscientious referees, points to the centre and convalidates the goal.

Olympic on the attack. Croatia replies with a 1-2 by Patikas and Jurin; but this move fails when Patikas hits badly and sends into the arms of the Croatia goalkeeper.

Olympic counter attack with Kalantzis who fires a great shot from outside the penalty area. This is punched over the bar by in-form Greg Woodhouse. Katholos repeats the dose from the same distance, but again Woodhouse saves well. Olympic are now definitely on top of Croatia, and are mounting attacks that are more intelligent, and above all, that have more penetration.

However, Croatia are not there simply watching.

on the ground, with a sizzling shot from the edge of the penalty area.

Kalantzis robs a ball off John Basic, and centres well. Kalantzis, like Patikas, is in form, and starting most of the attacks.

Now, Patikas opens the way for Meads, who crosses over to the left past all the Olympic defenders, and places the ball to Jurin. But the Croat comes face to face with Meades.

The Croatia striker finds Meier with him as the Olympic goalkeeper is ready to pluck the ball off his head.

In the 65th minute it is Patikas who finds the chink in the armour and nets the equaliser.

For a while after this goal,

efforts and moved in for the kill.

But the draw stayed, and in the end this was a just result as neither team deserved to lose.

CROATIA: Woodhouse, Alex Kovacic, Tomasic, Tom Basic, Woods (Caleta 41), Vidaic, Marian Kovacic (Kero 66), Arnold, Patikas, Jurin, Rezo (Meades 41).

OLYMPIC: Meier, Stewart-Johnson, Lambropoulos (Haniotis 41), Dakos, Spanadakis, Phillips, Naumov, Koussas (Matzias 78), Katholos, Svinos (Ziras 66), Kalantzis.

GOALS: M. Koussas 38 (Olympic), Patikas 56 (Croatia).

REFEREE: R. Lorenc.



Koussas (on ground) watches the ball as it goes out, missing Croatia's unguarded goal, with Woodhouse out of his charge.

CHALLENGE



Des Marton (second from right) supported by Barton, winds his way around the apia defence in his wizardly fashion.



One that got away. David Skeen (out of picture) tried to find the way over the crossbar.



Catlin takes the ball and eludes a challenge by Mike O'Shea of St George.



Catlin secures the ball and Koczka (left), and Petkovski, of St George.



The Apia team in it's makeshift composition at the St George Stadium.



Pedro Ricoy (centre) tries to control the ball.

CUP ACTION



the Apia net, but missed the target completely, as the ball sails bar.



Des Marton (centre) gives the Apia defenders much to do to hold him.



George (white strip) can only watch the action.



Action from the St George-Apia match that the Saints won 3-0.



SOUTH DIVISION CLUBS — NEWS

BUFFALO GOLD CUP

with



GREG BLAKE

Shocks and surprises have been the rule rather than the exception as the 1985 season got underway in Victoria last week with the first matches of the Buffalo Gold Cup. The Buffalo Cup is a pre-season competition contested between Melbourne's eight NSL clubs and the top four State League teams of the previous season.

But status and reputation have counted for nothing in the early games this year.

Reigning State League champions Morwell Falcons thrashed Footscray JUST 3-1. Fawkner held star-studded Juventus to 1-1 and Sunshine George Cross did the same to Greek giants Heidelberg.

And last Saturday night Melbourne Croatia, down to ten men for almost the entire second half, beat reigning Australian champions South Melbourne Hellas 1-0 to record the biggest upset of the tournament so far.

The cup kicked off last Wednesday evening with Green Gully, despite the loss of midfield star Paul Wade to Juventus, crushing State League side Box Hill 4-0. The star was striker Paul Lewis who hammered home all four goals and showed his best form for Green Gully since his return from a disastrous short spell at South Melbourne early last year.

The Hillmen, who have only just begun their pre-season training, were totally out of depth against their NSL opponents.

In the other game on Wednesday Footscray JUST, despite an inspired performance from keeper Dennis Boland in one of his last games with the Blues, were beaten 3-1 by Morwell Falcons.

Two promising recruits lined up for JUST, Stojilovic and Tapai, but neither could do much to stem the tide.

Boland stopped at least four clear chances before Morwell opened the scores from the penalty spot through Steve Moore.

Stojilovic equalised at the other end, also from the penalty spot, before further goals from Harry Bingham and Russell Athersyitch completed Footscray's humiliation.

On Friday night it took a last gasp goal from Heidelberg's John Gabrielson to snatch a draw for the Greek side against John Gardiner's Sunshine George Cross. Cross had taken the lead after half time thanks to a superb goal from Carl Gilder who has transferred back to the club from Polonia after leaving them mid-way through 1984.

The biggest surprise of the first round came on Friday night in the second game as a young Fawkner side held mighty Juventus to a 1-1 draw.

Juventus, with new signings Peter Lewis and Paul Wade taking the field, looked to be cruising when they took a ninth minute lead through Andrew Zinni but the depleted Fawkner side fought magnificently to hold their Italian rivals out.

Just after half time Fawkner's determination paid off when Ian Tuffield headed home Peter Boyle's free kick to level the scores.

Saturday evening's games produced another pair of fine performances — one individual and the other from a team.

Former Derby County and Hereford player Sean Lane started the new season in style for Preston with all three goals in a 3-2 win over Polonia to show that his lack-lustre performances after joining the club last year are a thing of the past. Lane had Preston leading after 13 minutes but Polonia hit back through Greg Warzawski to tie the scores up at half time.

Preston regained the lead three minutes into the second half and Lane completed his hat trick from the penalty spot in the 52nd minute before Polonia pulled a goal back from a Les Gregorczyk free kick two minutes later.

In Saturday night's second match Melbourne Croatia beat cup holders and NSL champions South Melbourne Hellas 1-0 despite playing a man short for much of the second half.

Croatia looked in trouble after a goal-less first half and the sending off of defender Tony Curcio just after the re-start.

Instead Croatia lifted it's game to the extent that it managed a winner just three minutes from full time when Steve Gojevic scored a fine goal after a jinking run into the six yard box.

FINAL SCORES:

Green Gully 4 - Box Hill 0
Footscray 1 - Morwell 3
B. Juventus 1 - Fawkner 1
Heidelberg 1 - Sunshine 1
Preston 3 - Polonia 2



Dzielakowski, the Polonia goalkeeper, is hard pressed by the Preston attackers, but manages to punch the ball away well.



Preston's new forward, Lane (right), in action against Polonia.



Polonia's Lipiarski (No.13) waits for something to come his way, but Dobon of Preston has already sent his pass through.



Another beautiful intervention by the Polonia goalkeeper, who punches the ball over the heads of a group of players.

SOUTH DIVISION CLUBS — NEWS

SOMETHING ABOUT THE CHAMPIONS

Finally, and not without some worrying moments, South Melbourne Hellas did what no other Melbourne club had managed to do in NSL History by winning the championship of the nation last season.

The big spending aristocrats with the most fanatical support in the land clinched the title which had eluded Melbourne's finest over the previous seven years.

South Melbourne's championship in 1984 has revitalised the scene down South and it was fitting that it was the club which was the pride and joy of the Victorian State League of years gone by that stole the glory for Melbourne.

After a succession of coaches and hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on many failed players as otherwise Hellas proved itself as a genuine NSL force. Without a title since it won it's last State League Championship back in 1976 Hellas changed all that last season by winning just about every competition the club entered into.

For many years recognised as one of the leading clubs off the field, 1984 saw South Melbourne Hellas prove themselves on the park as well.

But before it can be said that Hellas have truly come of age it must now repeat and even redouble it's efforts to try and stay at the top.

Not only is that the mark of a truly great club, but the pressure from it's many thousands of supporters will mean it is expected of the club.

Hellas last season set themselves a high standard and anything less than a repeat will be recognised as failure.

Thankfully the crew at Hellas have realised only hard work will help them to take the title again.

Gone are the old head-in-the-clouds attitudes that pervaded the club in the dime dark years gone by when Hellas heirarchy thought simply that success came by changing the coach and opening the chequebook.

The club has signed no new recognised NSL players over the summer and will do so only should the situation be desperate enough to dictate it.

Instead coach Len McKendry will be given free reign with a side that has played together for nearly two years now and hopefully produce another

than in their '84 championship year.

And that spells trouble for the other 23 NSL teams.

But no-one knows better than club president Leo Anazakis that there is still plenty of hard work to be done before the champagne is put on ice in the South Melbourne Social Club once again.

"Of course it's going to be hard to hold on to the championship", Anazakis says.

"Just like in everything in life, it's easier to reach the top than to stay there"

"There will be plenty of pressure on us from all sides. The other teams will be ready and waiting to give us a hard game. They'll need no motivation because they will be playing the champions."

"In Brisbane and Adelaide the players from those teams will motivate themselves"

But Anazakis sees the challenge of retaining the NSL title as an even money bet.



President, Leo Anazakis.

Despite the pressure, some sound reasoning tells the Hellas president that the first team will be even better prepared for a shot at the title than they were at this time last year.

"We look after our players and they are happy, so we'll have the same players except for Davidson," Anezakis explains.

"Of course we will miss



South Melbourne boss, Len McKendry.

together for the current team it reinforces Anezakis' summation that unless something goes terribly wrong, like a bad run of injuries, South Melbourne should be up the top somewhere at the end of the season.

There is certainly no over-confidence but Hellas has shown the ultimate faith in it's current playing staff with it's policy of buying no new players.

"Kanasoulis and Postecoglou should really establish themselves this year and we'll be looking to them and others like them to fill any gaps we have."

Kalogeros and Anazakis' own son are two names who may get their chance in the pre-season Buffalo Gold Cup.

"I really think we can do the job with the players we have", says Anezakis.

"We're not doing what we've done for over 10 years, just buying and buying players continually."

"The Buffalo Cup will be a good indicator of just how we will go this season and we'll see how our players are performing."

"We will see how we go but we will not be buying any more than possibly one new player for '85, if any."

One player on his way out is former captain Arthur Xanthopoulos — probably to Heidelberg or Green Gully who have both made offers.

A Hellas stalwart, he would be welcome to stay but at this stage he see's no

place for himself in the senior set-up

One player who is definately staying is the sometimes wayward genius Oscar Crino.

Crino went missing and rumours surfaced that he wanted out, but Anezakis explains it this way.

"The player was injured and told Len McKendry he would be missing for a week of training. When he hadn't come back after a week we started to get enquiries about him from Heidelberg and Melbourne Croatia and because we hadn't heard from him we thought he might be talking to other clubs."

"Quite simply someone got wind of him not contacting the club and started the rumours that he wanted to leave. When we finally got in touch with him he was as surprised as anyone to find out what had been going on."

"Unfortunately the rumours continue."

"But although it will be a further two weeks before he can start training again Oscar will be playing with us this year."

When pressed Anezakis named Juventus as the team most likely to threaten the Hellas dominance of the southern section of the NSL.

"They have good players, experience and some new signings" he explained.

"God only knows, but I think we'll be up there somewhere at the end of the year", he added.

South Melbourne Hellas playing staff 1985:

AROUND THE CLUBS

Big Spending Brunswick Juventus, having already added Paul Wade from Green Gully and Peter Lewis from Croatia, are chasing JUST's Gary McDowell and Derby County keeper now with Croatia Yakka Banovic. Juventus confirmed they are after the former Socceroo who left Heidelberg to join the now En Third Division club three seasons ago.

Juventus has also said it will come in for McDowell and when he is made available for transfer by Juventus McDowell is known to be keen to transfer to a successful club than the struggling New Footscray Road team.

Juve has approached Croatia about Banovic but prepared to meet the proposed \$40,000 asking price.

Juventus say they will not pursue their interest in the price is "realistic" and that they are already covered adequately in the goalkeeping area.

First choice is Sean Keogh and the club has rejected Ricky Mezzadra from Provisional League team Footscray City after he impressed officials with his display between the sticks in the 1984 end-of-season NSL Cup.

Also, Rumanian George Martin is still at the club although currently transfer listed.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Heidelberg have redoubled their efforts to snare South Melbourne Hellas captain and long-server Xanthopoulos following the club's dropping off from bidding for Brisbane Lions defender Alan Hunter.

Heidelberg lost interest when Hunter wasn't prepared to commit himself to more than a year of living in Victoria.

Xanthopoulos has been listed at \$10,000 by Heidelberg and they received immediate enquiries from Heidelberg Green Gully.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

New Preston coach Bill Murray faces a test over the early rounds of the pre-season Buffalo Cup.

Murray, who joined the club from Box Hill last year, faces the early rounds without Zarko Orlov, Claude Lucchesi, George Campbell, Ljube Petrovic and Gary Cole.

Cole is still away on holidays but the other quartet all standing out in dispute over their contracts.

On the plus side it looks like youth international goalkeeper Warren Spinks will line up with Preston coming season.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Footscray JUST is losing it's currently longest player, veteran goalkeeper Dennis Boland.

After nearly ten years of hard work between the Blues — a period where he has really earned as the team has struggled — Boland is leaving Footscray club for the final time.

In lieu of money owed to him by the club Footscray agreed to release him on a free transfer at the end of the current Buffalo Cup series in Victoria. Last year he coached Mordialloc as well as taking the field on the field with JUST but will now become the Mordialloc coach.

Boland never achieved the recognition his tenacious consistency and ability deserved but Footscray's success the NSL surely, on a number of occasions, can be directly to his magnificent efforts.

Although his service wasn't continuous it is the era for the JUST club.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Brilliant Melbourne Croatia star, Steve Gojevic, not be allowed to leave the club to join sister club of Sydney.

Gojevic insists he was told he was allowed to leave club president Joe Sigur and after training with Croatia said he was keen to move to the Harlequins.

The official line from the Melbourne club is "players just can't walk out on clubs".

SOUTH DIVISION CLUBS — NEWS

BERGERS WITH TOP CREDENTIALS

Can a club who's first team squad was decimated by transfers out of nearly half it's playing strength one year ago start the new season with pretensions of winning the championship?

In the case of Melbourne's Heidelberg the answer is very simply, a most emphatic, yes.

Heidelberg were the dominators of NSL football in Melbourne in the first seven years of competition, finishing as runners-up in the league three times, in the top five on five occasions, never in the lower half of the table, reaching three cup finals and winning a top four Grand Final in 1980.

No Melbourne teams could touch Heidelberg in terms of consistency — not even South Melbourne Hellas who went over five seasons without managing a league victory over it's fierce Greek rivals.

During their glory period Heidelberg — earlier known as Fitzroy United — saw at least eight of their playing staff either beginning or continuing sparkling careers on international duty for the Socceroos.

Hardly a player who donned the golden jerseys for the Bergers in the late '70s didn't represent Victoria at State level at one time or another.

And remarkably during this time the basic winning combination stayed much the same.

Remember the names: Banovic, Tansey, Yzen-doorn, Rooney, Selemidis, Buljevic, Cole, Paton, Olver, Campbell, Bannon and the likes.

But slowly, and then drastically after the loss of revered coach Len McKendry, the mighty Heidelberg teams of that era began breaking up until the summer of 1983/84 when the final ties with those great teams were as good as finally broken.

Off went Gary Cole, Jim Campbell and Jim Tansey and it was, effectively, the end of an era and disaster was predicted for the Bergers and their new ground at Heidelberg's Olympic Village.

That most of the players — Yzen-doorn excluded — transferred away from Heidelberg during 1982-1984 have never come close to capturing either the same individual form or as successful an NSL team is just another ironic twist in the tale.

At the start of the '84 season new coach Brian Garvey arrived from the UK on almost the eve of the season to find only three experienced campaigners left at the club.

Jeff Olver, who was only just talked into staying after he too asked for a transfer, Theo Selemidis and Charlie Yankos who had been just the young baby of the Heidelberg squad which took the Grand Final against Sydney City back in 1980.

Garvey, out on a one year contract which must have seemed about 12 months too long at that stage must have wished the earth

would open up and swallow him.

Despite the presence of a couple of relatively experienced NSL players like John Spanos and Ian McKie it was hardly a star-studded line-up.

And when pre-season Buffalo Cup and early season league form was little better than passable the Bergers were written off as one of the season's easy-beats.

But very quickly people wee about to have to change their minds.

Garvey drafted in a couple of State League players and two or three very promising youngsters and by mid-April the club was hot on the heels of the pace-setting teams like Hellas and Brunswick Juventus.



A good save by Olver for Heidelberg.



Valentine (left) of Heidelberg, and Hellas' Bobby Russell, fight it out, airborne.



Lions' Goalkeeper, Wayne Evans, snatches a high ball.

Their sparkle and aggression was winning supporters and games and although Garvey had some reservations about the younger players seeing out the season Heidelberg finished league runners-up and only just lost a thrilling southern NSL section Grand final to South Melbourne.

From the depths of despair to what supporters now feel is the club's

rightful place as one of Australia's premier sides and this year, with that memorable 1984 season under the players' belts, the club could go one better.

Garvey earned the plaudits from friends and foe alike for his youth policies last year and should his experienced players show the way this year the younger team members may help pay off his faith in them by landing one of the

major prizes in the coming NSL year.

The first indicator of the new found strength at Heidelberg was a vote of confidence by members for president Sam Gouloupoulos late last year and the adoption of his recommendation that he be allowed an 11 man committee of his choice.

A committee that Garvey says is far more positive than before.

"We can expect positive action from this new committee", Garvey explained. "It means stability for the club and it will be an asset in the coming season."

"Heidelberg is now one of the top clubs and if a top player is available we'll go after him."

The committee also convinced Garvey himself to stay on after it was predicted he would head

back to England on the expiry of last year's contract.

Garvey was resigned to returning home at the end of the year and when he left to "sort things out" he fully expected not to return.

But the club made sure Garvey knew he was very much wanted at the club so he returned and has signed a new one year contract.

A year which both he and the club hope will pay off.

SOUTH DIVISION CLUBS — NEWS

Garvey says the team did tremendously well last year but the bottom line is that they still didn't win anything.

Garvey is well aware of the club's previous NSL record of always being the bridesmaid and is intent on adding to Heidelberg's lone Grand Final triumph of 1980.

"We've lost no players as yet and at the moment we are working on last year's squad but I've always maintained we need more experience and we are in the motions of signing a couple of players", he said.

If it's experience Garvey's after he need not look much further than one player who seems sure to start the season at Heidelberg, former South Melbourne Hellas skipper Arthur Xanthopoulos.

Garvey also sees lack of goalscoring potential as a weakness and the club is hot on the heels of signing, despite some hitches, exciting young Melbourne Croatia striker Robert Markovac.

A most promising and explosive young player, Markovic would be ideal to fit into the young team on the verge of greatness and he could be one of the stars of the new season.

And although the case is likely to go to the tribunal it seems former Hellas and now Canberra star George Christopoulos will be returning to Melbourne to join Heidelberg.

The dealings have come to a stalemate with the Bergers offering \$14,000 and Canberra refusing anything less than \$20,000 for the midfielder.

Whilst Steve Winn and Don Macleod haven't returned from close-season journeys to Europe only one of last season's players probably will not be turning out for Heidelberg this season, striker Mike Peterson.

Peterson is on trial with a Dutch club and, says Garvey, is believed to be progressing well.

The youth element however will not stop despite any new signings Garvey told me.

"We'll get some experience in the first team and draft youngsters through the youth team as we have done" he said.

"Steve Tassios is just one of a number of players who came into the team during last season and will get better."

"Tassios has plenty of potential, lots of natural ability and is a great player to watch."

"Our oldest player last year was 24 and none had really experienced some of the situations we had to face."

"They showed character at times and it was a learning experience for them."

"We were beaten by circumstances in the Grand Final last year against



Winn.

Hellas but we played some of our best football of the year in the final series."

By circumstance Garvey was referring to the sending off of a tough central defender and Socceroo Charlie Yankos, a player who figured in transfer rumours earlier this month.

But Garvey refuted the rumours by saying that Yankos and a couple of other players will be signing for the club again within a couple of days.

And the final word from Garvey is that he realistically thinks he can get the team to go just one better this season and finish first in the southern section of the NSL instead of runners-up.

"We've got the same squad as last year when we did well and with improvements there is no reason why we can't go that one better."



Steve Marley, of Heidelberg, between Lions' C. Daunt (No.15) and Junna, who waits to pick up the pieces (No.10).

Heidelberg playing staff 1985:

Name	Position	Previous Club	Age
Jeff Olver	Goalkeeper	Albion Rovers (Vic)	24
Ian McKie	Defender	West Adelaide	22
Charlie Yankos	Defender	Polonia Juniors	23
Don Macleod	Defender	Notts Forest	24
Steve Marley	Defender	—	—
Joe Angele	Defender	Juniors	18
John Gabrielson	Defender	Box Hill	18
Theo Selemidis	Midfielder	Hellas Juniors	25
Mike Valentine	Midfielder	Box Hill	24
Steve Tassios	Forward	Juniors	18
Scott Patterson	Forward	Box Hill	28
Steve Winn	Forward	Marconi	25
Stuart Stevenson	Forward	Scotland	22
John Metaxis	Forward	Juniors	—
Probables:			
A. Xanthopoulos	Defender	S.M. Hellas	28
G. Christopoulos	Def./Mid.	Canberra	24
R. Markovac	Forward	Melb. Croatia	17



Macleod, of Heidelberg.



Theo Selemidis, in action against Lions in the Buffalo Gold Cup last week.

PHOTO'S - FROM THE BUFFALO CUP



Frank Geremia, of Juventus (right) tries to pass around a Fawcner player.



Gary Ward of Juventus.



Geremia in action.

INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

with
Anthony Drivas

There is now one year left, before the preliminary World Cup games are completed. From their outcome we will know who will be the 24 Nations to compete in the Finals in Mexico next year.

In this report we will take a close look at the seven European Groups, and next week look at the situation of the rest of the world.

GROUP 1

Poland, Belgium, Greece and Albania are the four nations in this Group. The first team, goes straight to Mexico, while the runner-up plays in a play-off with the runner-up in Group 5, to determine which nation will play in the finals.

Albania have been the surprise packet so far. They drew in Poland, and beat the highly fancied Belgium's comfortably.

The results so far:-

BELGIUM — ALBANIA 3-1
POLAND — GREECE 3-1
POLAND — ALBANIA 2-2
GREECE — BELGIUM 0-0
ALBANIA — BELGIUM 2-0



BELGIUM TEAM

POINTS TABLE

	Played	Goals	Pts.
1. Poland	2	5-3	3
2. Albania	3	5-5	3
3. Belgium	3	3-3	3
4. Greece	2	1-3	1

Games to be played:-

27th Feb. — GREECE v ALBANIA
27th Mar. — BELGIUM v GREECE
17th Apr. — ALBANIA v GREECE
1st May — BELGIUM v POLAND
19th May — GREECE v POLAND
30th May — ALBANIA v POLAND
11th Sept. — POLAND v BELGIUM

GROUP 2

There are five nations in this group. West Germany, Sweden, Portugal, Czechoslovakia and Malta. The first two teams, qualify for Mexico. The favourites, Germany, have played only one game. It is believed the second place will bring out a big battle amongst the three other countries. Malta are not given much of a chance in this group.

Up to now, the following results have been achieved:-

SWEDEN — MALTA 4-0
SWEDEN — PORTUGAL 0-1
PORTUGAL — CZECHOSLOVAKIA 2-1
W. GERMANY — SWEDEN 2-0
CZECHOSLOVAKIA — MALTA 4-0
PORTUGAL — SWEDEN 1-3
MALTA — W. GERMANY 2-3



WEST GERMANY

POINTS TABLE

	Played	Goals	Pts.
W. Germany	2	5-2	4
Portugal	3	4-4	4
Sweden	4	7-4	4
Czechoslovakia	2	5-2	2
Malta	3	2-11	0

Games to be played:-

10th Feb. — MALTA v PORTUGAL
24th Feb. — PORTUGAL v W. GERMANY
27th Mar. — W. GERMANY v MALTA
21st Apr. — MALTA v CZECHOSLOVAKIA
1st May — CZECHOSLOVAKIA v W. GERMANY
5th June — SWEDEN v CZECHOSLOVAKIA
25th Sept. — CZECHOSLOVAKIA v PORTUGAL
25th Sept. — SWEDEN v W. GERMANY
12th Oct. — PORTUGAL v MALTA
16th Oct. — CZECHOSLOVAKIA v SWEDEN
16th Nov. — W. GERMANY v CZECHOSLOVAKIA
17th Nov. — MALTA v SWEDEN

GROUP 3

Again there are 5 teams in this group. The first two qualify for Mexico. In this group we find England, Nth. Ireland, Romania, Finland and Turkey.

England are favoured and a close battle will be fought for second place. England have made a dream start, but Nth. Ireland have not performed as well as they were expected to, and Romania may well take advantage of the bad form of the Irish.

The results so far:

FINLAND — Nth. IRELAND 1-0
Nth. IRELAND — ROMANIA 3-2
ENGLAND — FINLAND 5-0
TURKEY — FINLAND 1-2
TURKEY — ENGLAND 0-8
Nth. IRELAND — FINLAND 2-1

POINTS TABLE

	Played	Goals	Pts.
England	2	13-0	4
Nth. Ireland	3	5-4	4
Finland	4	4-8	4
Romania	1	2-3	0
Turkey	2	1-10	0

Games to be played:-

27th Feb. — Nth. IRELAND v ENGLAND
3rd Apr. — ROMANIA v TURKEY
1st May — Nth. IRELAND v TURKEY
1st May — ROMANIA v ENGLAND
22nd May — FINLAND v ENGLAND
6th June — FINLAND v ROMANIA
28th Aug. — ROMANIA v FINLAND
11th Sept. — TURKEY v Nth. IRELAND
11th Sept. — ENGLAND v ROMANIA
25th Sept. — FINLAND v TURKEY
16th Oct. — ROMANIA v Nth. IRELAND
16th Oct. — ENGLAND v TURKEY
13th Nov. — ENGLAND v Nth. IRELAND
14th Nov. — TURKEY v ROMANIA

GROUP 4

With two wins, in two games, European champions France are highly fancied for first place in this group, which also contains East Germany, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, who are expected to fight for the second place which would take them to the Mexico finals, and Luxembourg, who do not seem capable of threatening any of the three for a final place.

Up to now, the following results have been achieved:-

YUGOSLAVIA — BULGARIA 0-0
LUXEMBOURG — FRANCE 0-4
E. GERMANY — YUGOSLAVIA 2-3
LUXEMBOURG — E. GERMANY 0-5
FRANCE — BULGARIA 1-0
BULGARIA — LUXEMBOURG 4-0

POINTS TABLE

	Played	Goals	Pts.
France	2	5-0	4
Yugoslavia	2	3-2	3
Bulgaria	3	4-1	3
E. Germany	2	7-3	3
Luxembourg	3	13-0	2



YUGOSLAVIA

Games to be played:-

27th Mar. — YUGOSLAVIA v LUXEMBOURG
3rd Apr. — YUGOSLAVIA v FRANCE
6th Apr. — BULGARIA v E. GERMANY
1st May — LUXEMBOURG v YUGOSLAVIA
2nd May — BULGARIA v FRANCE
18th May — E. GERMANY v LUXEMBOURG
1st June — BULGARIA v YUGOSLAVIA
11th Sept. — E. GERMANY v FRANCE
25th Sept. — LUXEMBOURG v BULGARIA
28th Sept. — YUGOSLAVIA v E. GERMANY
30th Oct. — FRANCE v LUXEMBOURG
16th Nov. — FRANCE v YUGOSLAVIA
16th Nov. — E. GERMANY v BULGARIA

GROUP 5

Hungary's big 2-1 win in Holland has made them favourites for the first place which leads them to the finals. But Austria and Holland are not expected to give up without a fight. Cyprus do not appear to be any great threat in this group. The runner-up in this group will play the runner-up in Group 1, for a finals birth.

Up to now, the following results have been achieved:-

CYPRUS — AUSTRIA 1-2
HUNGARY — AUSTRIA 3-1
HOLLAND — HUNGARY 1-2
AUSTRIA — HOLLAND 1-0
CYPRUS — HUNGARY 1-2
CYPRUS — HOLLAND 0-1

POINTS TABLE

	Played	Goals	Pts.
Hungary	3	7-3	6
Austria	3	4-4	4
Holland	3	2-3	2
Cyprus	3	2-5	0

Games to be played:-

27th Feb. — HOLLAND v CYPRUS
3rd Apr. — HUNGARY v CYPRUS
17th Apr. — AUSTRIA v HUNGARY
1st May — HOLLAND v AUSTRIA
14th May — AUSTRIA v CYPRUS
14th May — HUNGARY v HOLLAND

GROUP 6

The Soviet Union has started off badly. Together with Denmark they were favourites to win and go to Mexico. The Swiss are also fancied, having 100% record up to now.

The Republic of Ireland and Norway are also strong opposition and could cause many upsets. This is a closely contested group, but the Soviet Union and Denmark look likely qualifiers.

The results so far are:-

EIRE — SOVIET UNION 1-0
NORWAY — SWITZERLAND 0-1
DENMARK — NORWAY 1-0
NORWAY — SOVIET UNION 1-1
NORWAY — EIRE 1-0
SWITZERLAND — DENMARK 1-0
DENMARK — EIRE 3-0

POINTS TABLE

	Played	Goals	Pts.
Switzerland	2	2-0	4
Denmark	3	4-1	4
Norway	4	2-3	3
Eire	3	1-4	2
Soviet Union	2	1-2	1

Games to be played:-

17th Apr. — SWITZERLAND v SOVIET UNION

1st May — EIRE v NORWAY

2nd May — SOVIET UNION v SWITZERLAND

2nd June — EIRE v SWITZERLAND

5th June — DENMARK v SOVIET UNION

11th Sept. — SWITZERLAND v EIRE

25th Sept. — SOVIET UNION v DENMARK

9th Oct. — DENMARK v SWITZERLAND

16th Oct. — NORWAY v DENMARK

16th Oct. — SOVIET UNION v EIRE

30th Oct. — SOVIET UNION v NORWAY

13th Nov. — SWITZERLAND v NORWAY

13th Nov. — EIRE v DENMARK



PORTUGAL

GROUP 7

Scotland and Spain are fighting it out to see who will automatically qualify for the finals in Mexico. The runner-up will have to play-off with the winner of the Oceania Group for the privilege of going to Mexico next year.

From results up to now Scotland seem to be more consistent and are likely to hold off the challenge from the Spanish. The Welsh, too, may have a big say in the outcome of this group. The fourth country in this group is Iceland, but they are not seen as a likely qualifier.

Up to now, the results posted in group 7 are as follows:-

ICELAND — WALES 1-0

SPAIN — WALES 3-0

SCOTLAND — ICELAND 3-0

SCOTLAND — SPAIN 3-1

WALES — ICELAND 2-1



SPAIN

POINTS TABLE

	Played	Goals	Pts.
Scotland	2	6-1	4
Spain	2	4-2	2

A BRACE OF GOALS BY BONIEK PUTS PAID TO LIVERPOOL

JUVENTUS - 2
LIVERPOOL - 0

The traditional European Champions Vs Cup Winners match was played in Turin last week, won by the Italians with two goals by Boniek.

The Stadio Comunale, under a cover of snow only a short time before, had been cleared just enough to make the ground playable, but the English players found this too hard for their liking, and did not seem to relish playing too much.

However, Liverpool played a good game, and only the wizardry of Boniek proved the difference between the two teams.

Liverpool, currently sixth in the English League, and Juventus in seventh position proved once more that no matter what their position in their respective leagues may be, both teams are among the most classy sides in Europe.



BONIEK - whose brace of goals sank Liverpool at the Comunale last week.

The Italians marked Rush almost out of the game, and therein lies their success. The English players did the same to Rossi, but there was no way that they could blot out Boniek.



FROM THE COMMENTATOR'S BOX

MIKE HILL, COMMENTATOR - MATCH OF THE DAY - NETWORK 0/28



MIKE HILL

Already players are starting to prepare for the 1985 Season but for the 22 players who undertook the World Tour for the Socceroos its been a break of only 5 weeks.

The tour record reads played 12, won 3, lost 8, drew 1, Goals scored 15, goals conceded 21. As in most cases facts and figures can be deceptive.

The tour was arranged to give the Socceroos experience of playing top teams in various conditions as preparation for this years World Cup Elimination Matches and too this end this tour was a success.

The tour also offered coach Frank Arok the chance to see how certain players reacted to a long tour under different environments and again to this end the tour was a success.

Let's follow the tour that started on Thursday 1st November leaving Sydney at midday it was 3am when the players finally turned in for their first night in Peking. An official reception the first of many was awaiting the players on Friday followed by their first look at the Workers Stadium.

The Workers Stadium holds 110,000 and took only 9 months to build, it was to be the venue for the opening match of the tour the following night, the China Australian Ampol Cup match against the China National team.

80,000 fans gathered in the Workers Stadium on a cool Autumn Peking night when the smog was heavy and the Socceroos started their tour with a 3-2 loss, China took the lead inside 3 minutes with a goal by Zhou Dayu, John Kosmina equalised but China went 2-1 up at half time thanks to a goal by Lin Qiang. Kosmina equalised again early in the second half but what can only be described as a

"home town" refereeing decision gave China a free kick which Hou Hushen executed brilliantly to give China a 3-2 win.

The Socceroos returned to the Workers Stadium two nights later to meet the Peking team. Coach Arok gave the 11 players who didn't play in the first match a run and a win was recorded by 3-2 in a match that the Socceroos dominated with Peking scoring 2 late goals. It was the younger members of the party who shone under the Peking lights with a strong match from Tom McCulloch and Peter Raskopoulos in midfield and Oscar Crino who also scored 2 goals with his South Melbourne team-mate Charlie Egan getting the other.

The next morning it was a flight to Shanghai, a city with a lot of western influence. After yet another official welcome it was training at the Shanghai Stadium, which was built in 1930 and based on the Coliseum in Los Angeles. The match against Shanghai was to be played on Wednesday afternoon and was already a sell out with 50,000 tickets sold.

The Socceroos recorded their second win with goals by Dave Ratcliffe and Charlie Egan while the host failed to get on the score sheet. Again this match, as the previous two, was shown live throughout China on television and it was a happy Socceroo squad that departed the following day to Canton for their final match in China.

Canton had a disappointing China Championship and again at the official welcome the host stated, as all our previous ones had, that their team was no match for the Socceroos but they wanted to learn.

A 30,000 crowd again ensured that the match would be shown live throughout China. The Socceroos dominated and went ahead by Oscar Crino but it was one of those nights when the Socceroos couldn't score, and the Canton side, after equalising by Lu Sheng the sub, won the match with the last kick of the match with a goal in a "million" by Hang Hueiling.

The Socceroos record in China in the space of 7 days was played 4 won 2 lost 2 goals for 8 goals against 7. The Chinese, their hospitality second to none are fast learners, one thing is certain the Socceroos will be welcomed back in two years time.

A train took the party from Canton to Hong Kong and then on to Europe.

Next week the Socceroos start off the European leg in sensational style.

OLYMPIC AIRWAYS NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE 1985 FIXTURES Round 1 to Round 4 ROUND 1

Southern Division — 9/10 March

Sunshine G.C. v Heidelberg Utd. Footscray v Preston. South Melbourne v Green Gully. West Adelaide v Brunswick U.J. Brisbane City v Brisbane Lions. Melb. Croatia v Adelaide City.

Norther Division

Leichhardt v Wollongong C. Sydney Croatia v Marconi. Newcastle R.U. v Sydney Olympic. Penrith City v St George. Inter-Monaro v Canberra Arrows. Sydney City v Blacktown City.

ROUND 2

Southern Division — 16/17 March

Heidelberg Utd v Footscray. Preston v South Melbourne. Brunswick U.J. v Green Gully. Brisbane Lions v West Adelaide. Adelaide City v Brisbane City. Sunshine G.C. v Melb. Croatia.

Northern Division

Wollongong C. v Sydney Croatia. Marconi v Newcastle R.U. St George v Sydney Olympic. Canberra Arrows v Penrith City. Blacktown City v Inter-Monaro. Leichhardt v Sydney City.

ROUND 3

Southern Division — 23/24 March

Preston v Brunswick U.J. Green Gully v Brisbane Lions. West Adelaide v Adelaide City. Brisbane City v Sunshine G.C. South Melbourne v Footscray. Melb. Croatia v Heidelberg Utd.

Northern Division

Marconi v St George. Sydney Olympic v Canberra Arrows. Penrith City v Blacktown City. Inter-Monaro v Leichhardt. Newcastle R.U. v Sydney Croatia. Sydney City v Wollongong C.

ROUND 4

Southern Division — 30/31 March

Footscray v Melb. Croatia. Heidelberg Utd v Brisbane City. Sunshine G.C. v West Adelaide. Adelaide City v Green Gully. Brisbane Lions v Preston. Brunswick U.J. v South Melbourne.

Northern Division

Sydney Croatia v Sydney City. Wollongong C. Inter-Monaro. Leichhardt v Penrith City. Blacktown City v Sydney Olympic. Canberra Arrows v Marconi. St George v Newcastle R.U.

STOP PRESS

Information received at SOCCER VOICE indicated that Croat player Vedran Rozic had been released by the Yugoslav Association, and could play for the King Tomislav Club as a result of a telex received yesterday.

The A.S.F., when contacted, said that no such telex has been received.

It is known that Croatia had very strong hopes that Rozic's release would come in time for him to play against St George tonight, but the A.S.F. reply to the contrary leaves the player's position as complicated as it was before.

INTERVIEW WITH A.S.F. DIRECTOR, BRIAN EMERY

Before we take up the battle for a place in the finals in the 1986 World Cup, Soccer Voice wished to learn at what stage are our preparations for the coming elimination rounds.



Brian Emery

We decided that to gather this information the best place was at the main sources, one of which is the ASF Executive Director, Brian Emery, who very gentlemanly agreed to give us the following interview, even though we presented ourselves unannounced, as journalistic ethics demand. (For this we must apologise to Mr Emery).

This interview, which we are publishing in whole, is published in whole.

was very interesting from several points of view, and we feel our readers will agree about this.

Q — VOICE — Mr Emery, you were with the Australian squad on the tour of China and Europe last November, did you watch all, or most of the games?

A — EMERY — Yes, I watched every game.

Q — Did you find the opposition of the same

standard we expect to meet in the elimination rounds of the World Cup, or not as strong, or better?

A — It's different. How can you grade it? How can you grade the world's largest clubs?

Q — Were the teams we met in November as committed as those we expect to meet?

A — Oh, yes. Yes. When you consider some of the players who played against us; they're professional players. They don't know how to play below their standard.

Q — How do you find our preparedness at the moment?

A — I think it's first class. We took literally two teams, 22 players on that tour.

Q — There is always room for improvement in everything. What do you think should be done to improve the team?

A — Ask the coach. He doesn't tell me how to administer the affairs of the Federation. I don't tell him how to coach.

Q — Do you think the present players in the National team, or those who will be in the National team, are stronger because of participation in the NSL, than they were before as State League players?

A — Oh, definitely. The whole basis of the National

League, the philosophy of raising the standard of any sport, is to get the athletes of the country in competition. And this is what is being done in the National League.

Q — So you find that the NSL has made a contribution to have a better National team.

A — Oh, definitely. That, to me, is a self-evident truth.

Q — Can you tell us what plans the ASF has for the National team for 1985?

A — Yes. The team will be entering into training camp, two training camps in September. The programme for 1985 is that there will be a series of four camps, two in May, one in June, then on the 3rd of September they will be entering camp in preparation for the away games against New Zealand on the 21st of September, then the games for the Australia-China Ampol Cup, then a possible game in Greece on our way to the 'away' game in Israel on the 8th of October, and then we'll have three to four days break, and we'll be in camp again for the four home games.

Q — Of the teams coming to Australia, could you mention which teams these are?

A — No. We are still negotiating. At the moment it is anticipated that there will be one team from Italy, one from England, and possibly one from Greece.

played 'away' on September 21 and October 6 respectively; followed by 'home' games against Israel, Taipei and New Zealand on October 20, the first, followed by two games against Taipei on October 23 and 27, and finally a match against New Zealand on November 3.

This round will be preceded by an International Tournament designed as a trial run for the major elimination round that Australia must win before a final two match (home and away) test against either Scotland or Spain to be played in November.

(These last two games are the creation of the uncomprehensible brainwaves that FIFA always reserves for Australia and the other countries in this part of the world. — Ed.)